

Today, Mr. Speaker, I would like to dedicate my remarks and give my thanks to Lee Bothwell, the pilot of that helicopter; to Marna Fleetwood, a nurse on the helicopter; and to Amy Reeby, another nurse on the helicopter. They are true heroes. I offer my condolences to their young families. All of them have young children. I hope they rest in peace.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mrs. MALONEY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. MALONEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. SAXTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. SAXTON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mrs. ROUKEMA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. ROUKEMA addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

IMPORTANCE OF A BALANCED BUDGET, WELFARE REFORM AND MEDICARE TO AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I have just returned from 4 days in Georgia visiting with constituents, meeting with a few civic clubs, and riding in a parade or two. In talking around the district that I represent, the coastal area of Georgia, Georgia's first district, the three predominant things that seem to be on people's minds are balancing the budget, reforming welfare, and the changes in the Medicare Program.

On balancing the budget, even though the other body across the Hall failed to pass the balanced budget amendment, it is absolutely undeniable that the American people want us to balance the budget. As a member of the Committee on Appropriations I can say that we are moving in that direction. We have 1 appropriations bill left out of 13. Hopefully, we will pass that this week or next week. When we do, we will have all of our appropriations bills passed, which take us to having a balanced budget by the year 2002.

The importance of this, Mr. Speaker, is that as we have these billion dollar deficits each year, it takes money away from other programs and we are unable to pay down the debt. Now all we are doing is servicing the interest. Currently, the interest on the national

debt is the third largest item in our budget every year. In 2 years that interest is expected to exceed all of the military spending. Once we get rid of the deficit, we can start paying off the principal beyond the interest of the debt. Of course, it will take many, many years. We have a \$4.8 trillion debt.

The definition, Mr. Speaker, of a trillion, to illustrate it, and, first of all, it is almost beyond comprehension, but if we spent \$100,000 a minute, 24 hours a day, it would take 19 years to get to \$1 trillion. We currently have a debt of \$4.8 trillion. We simply cannot pass that on to the children of the United States of America.

I think it is very important that this House is moving toward a balanced budget as fast as we can. I certainly hope the folks in the other body feel the same way.

We have passed welfare reform in the House. Our welfare reform has four significant planks to it.

No. 1, a work requirement. If an individual is able-bodied, in order to get welfare, they should have to work.

No. 2, a mechanism to discourage illegitimate births, since that is one of the biggest problems in America today.

No. 3, State flexibility. We may do it differently in Georgia than the folks in New York, but let us make those decisions.

And No. 4, no welfare benefits to illegal aliens. We want to help them if they are hurt in this country, but we also want them to get back home if they are not American citizens, so that they are not coming over to America to enjoy the benefits of our generous public benefits system.

The third thing people are interested in, of course, is the Medicare Program. The current trustees in April said that Medicare is going broke. We have to move to save it. We are trying to slow the growth of it, trying to make the growth of Medicare inflation about 6 percent, which is closer to what it is in regular medical inflation. Actually, regular medical inflation was down last year. It was not even inflation. But the costs were down.

The thing we need to do on Medicare is protect and preserve it by simplifying it. We want to give senior citizens a whole list of options: choice of doctors, choice of traditional fee-for-service plans, choice of traditional Medicare, and, along with that, some other options like Medisave accounts and so forth.

We believe all this can be done, Mr. Speaker, and the result will be a better product to American seniors. Again, we want to protect and preserve it.

The big frustration that the American people seem to be having is while we have done a lot of things in the House, across the Hall, in the other body, they are taking the route of inaction. It is true today they passed welfare reform, but we passed ours back in March. It is time to bring these issues to a question. Will the other body and

will the executive branch join the House, the lower Chamber, in making the reforms necessary to preserve our country?

I hope that they will, because we are clearly on the road to personal responsibility, personal discipline, balancing the budget, lowering taxes, decreasing Government regulation and micromanagement out of Washington, and, best of all and most importantly, increasing personal freedom. We cannot do it alone. We have to have the cooperation of the full legislative branch of Government, which means the other body, and we have to have the executive branch to sign this into law.

Mr. Speaker, if we can get the cooperation of the folks across the hall, I believe we will have a balanced budget, we will have Medicare reform, and we will have welfare reform. This, Mr. Speaker, I believe, is what the American people are asking for.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak to my colleagues regarding the important legislation which is before the House in order to reduce domestic violence here and across the United States. I wish to illustrate the importance of such legislation by a domestic violence conference which was held in my home of Montgomery County, PA, just this past Saturday. It is the third in a series of three conferences sponsored by Laurel House, which is the shelter for abused children and women, the Victim Services Center of Montgomery County, and the Women's Center of Montgomery County, along with the Commission On Women and Families, sponsored by the county commissioners.

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In this case, all of them work together to make sure that legislative action, as well as court action and police action, is in fact brought together so that we can reduce violence in the home, reduce violence across America.

I have to compliment the police departments across the country, as well as in my home area of Pennsylvania, for doing so much with the Protection From Abuse Act, which requires there be protection for those who have been abused, to be able to have protective orders, to be absent from the marital home, and in fact have the tranquility and the privacy they deserve and be free of harm from the offending spouse.

The courts as well have been very sensitive in being involved in sensitivity programs. Many of our jurists have been involved with domestic violence awareness and are very sensitive now in their sentences and their treatment of such cases.

But I call to your attention, Mr. Speaker, to some legislation which has

been introduced which I am supporting, which in fact will go a long way to help those in the domestic violence network who are trying to prevent such occurrences from continuing, to the Molinari legislation, which will be calling for a prohibition of insurance companies in denying coverage for those who have been victims of domestic violence. This was very important legislation, and legislation that is so self-evident that it should already be passed. But I am hopeful as a result of the conferences we recently held in Montgomery County, as well as across the country, we will support this kind of legislation which is very important.

There is legislation as well that deals with and calls for training for domestic violence prevention for health care workers and health care professionals across the country. This is a very good area of influence and of assistance that we think can go a long way as well to reduce domestic violence.

Finally, legislation that I will be introducing shortly is going to call for coordinated community response for domestic violence. While we have worked together on the antidrug programs and in other important community endeavors, Mr. Speaker, this is one area where we need to make sure we bring all the forces together that can make a difference, whether it be the families, whether it be the clergy, whether it be the courts, whether it be police or those people who work in the victim services center, who work in the shelters for abused women and children, wherever it may be. We need to bring those coordinated efforts together so we are reducing the incidence of such crime, we are prosecuting those who commit such crimes, and make sure that America is safer because of our intervention and our coordinated assistance.

I will be pleased to report back to the Speaker and my fellow colleagues about legislation and coordinated community response as we in the 104th Congress unfold our proreform agenda, to make sure we take into account these anticrime efforts which will help support families.

MEDICARE CUTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DOGGETT] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, I am here again tonight, as I was last night and this morning, to talk about the future of Medicare and specifically to discuss the new Republican Medicare plan, which is the pay-more-get-less plan. In the event that anyone has not gotten all the details, that is really what it boils down to. But we will spend the next hour discussing the details of the impact of this plan.

Why is it that having discussed this plan to some extent already, that I am back again talking about it some

more? Well, I can tell you that the reason is because on Thursday of this week, the day after tomorrow, just a few hours away, the Committee on Ways and Means will have 1 day of hearings, 1 day for all of the people in America, all of the experts on this subject, and let me assure you that some of the best experts on Medicare are the 37 million Americans who depend on Medicare for their health care, but 1 day in the entire year in which that committee will take time to hear what should the future of Medicare be, what should the specifics of legislation be. And in that 1 day and that 1 day only, will they focus on what ultimately could be the beginning of the total destruction of Medicare as we have known it for the last three decades. So it is critical to take every opportunity to focus attention and to advise the people of America on what is about to happen with reference to this critical Medicare system.

Now, I have to say to those who may have concern as to whether this message is getting out and whether people are hearing about it and really realize the impact of these drastic changes on them, that I believe the answer is a strong yes; that indeed the attention that we as Democrats have focused on the plan that the Republicans have to grab \$270 billion out of the Medicare system in order to fund their tax breaks for the privileged few in this country, has already had a big impact.

It was a little over a month ago that the Washington Post stated, "Medicare premiums would soar under new options in Republican plan." They point out that under all three versions of the Republican working documents that have been leaked to the press, Medicare premiums would go up, Medicare deductibles would go up, and Medicare copayments will go up.

I can recall seeing some of those leaked documents and knowing that there were Republican Members actually advocating that we needed to discourage the seniors from having what is called Medigap insurance. That is to pick up the cost of what Medicare does not pay through private insurance. And it was part of this Republican theory that our seniors are simply not paying enough for their health care. Even though they have to pick up the costs for their prescriptions, even though we have no effective long-term health care plan for those seniors who might face the possibility of a nursing home, even with all of the things not covered by the Medicare system, as good as it is today, the Republicans say they are not having to pay enough and we need to find a way to actually discourage them from having this private Medigap insurance.

Well, when the plan was unveiled, to the extent the veil has been pulled back, and it is only a partial lifting of the veil that we have had in the last few days, when the plan was partially unveiled, the Republicans began to back off from this theory and began to

say well, we really do not want to increase deductibles, and we are not sure we want to increase copayments, and yes, it is OK to have Medigap insurance.

So as they have heard from Americans across this country, as members of the Democratic Party have had the courage to stand here on the floor and speak out about this plan, they have begun to back off. I cannot help but think if we continue to speak out, even though they accord us only 1 day of hearings, if we continue to speak out at every possible opportunity, they will yet rethink the pay-more-get-less plan and recognize that it is not in the best interests of the American people.

Of course, with reference to the plan that they have unveiled in seeking 1 day of hearings, there have been a number of people, and not just Democrats, who have been critical of that. As I think about Republican-oriented newspapers in this country, I can think of few that are more Republican-oriented than the lead paper in the city of Dallas, in my home State of Texas, the Dallas Morning News. I want to quote briefly from an editorial that they had on this subject of limiting the right of the American people to know the details of this. I say almost the most Republican paper in this country, because undoubtedly the most Republican paper is the American Civilization Newspaper. It is the newspaper of the Progress and Freedom Foundation, which was founded by our Speaker, NEWT GINGRICH.

As you will recall in February of this year, the lead editorial from that foundation was entitled "For freedom's sake, eliminate Social Security." In that lead editorial in February, the editorial derided Social Security, in addition to Medicare, and it said that "It is time to slay," and I am quoting, "the largest government entitlement program of all, Social Security." It said, "Social Security must be abolished."

It is that kind of extreme ideological thinking that I think is behind the effort to first subvert and weaken the Medicare system with the pay-more-get-less system, and then to go after the weakening and the eventual destruction of the Social Security System, as the Speaker's own newspaper advocated back in February of this year.

But returning to Texas and returning to the very Republican-oriented Dallas Morning News, on September 10, under a title "Changing Medicare, public will need time to grasp reforms," the Dallas Morning News says,

Remember last year when the Democrats tried to rush final health plan through Congress just before the August recess? At that time the Republican congressional leaders said look, these reforms are too complicated. The American people need time to absorb them. Let's break for August and let the American people digest and debate them.

They say, "The Republican response was appropriate." Of course, you would